

Gotham's Dead Building Code.

Though Defunct as a Code It Is Much Alive as an Issue—A Few Guesses About Why Mayor McClellan Vetoed the Proposed Ordinance.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.
[Our New York Correspondent.]

FOR a small man Mayor McClellan is certainly making some large noises. Scarcely is he through firing Blingham than he jars all Tammany Hall by vetoing the building code. Now, to understand the building code one must know the book of graft. Of late years Tammany Hall has been called the chief contracting firm of the city. There are all sorts of juicy building plums to be had, and it has been many times whispered, hinted and intimated in divers ways that Mr. C. Francis Murphy, Tammany boss, through himself, his brothers and associates, had a very large and fat finger in the contract pie. Through the building inspectors many forms of tyranny are possible and many forms of holdup can be practiced. Advantages to certain manufacturers and others may also be conferred in the building code, as, for example, to the makers of hollow tiles. How easy it is for the code revisers to specify that builders must use a certain form of tile that only one manufacturer or combine of manufacturers produces! When it is reflected that thousands of dollars worth of tiles are often required in



CHARLES F. MURPHY.

one building, a little figuring will show how many millions might be involved in a single innocent looking item like this in a city the size of New York. Now, it is more than suspected that there was just this sort of an African concealed in this particular building code wood pile. Enter at this point Daniel F. Cohalan, who succeeded Mr. William Bourke Cockran as sachem of Tammany. Cohalan is not as much of a wordologist as Cockran, but probably knows more. Cockran's profundity is mostly in his voice. Cohalan is something of an orator himself, but is also canny and a politician and can think as well as declaim. The sachem is the titular head of Tammany Hall. Croker was and Murphy is only chairman of the finance committee. The fact that this comparatively minor post carries with it the boss-ship of the organization and makes its possessor the it of New York politics shows just how important money is in the eyes of Tammany politicians.

To return to Sachem Cohalan. While the paper head of Tammany is overshadowed by the real head, he is still a good sized proposition in the society. Everybody knows that Cockran was a big noise. Well, Cohalan is not so much of an elocutionist as Cockran, but he is big enough to have his brother John the surrogate of New York county and to be himself very much in evidence in the framing of nominations and other slates. Dan Cohalan is the large push behind the new building code—or, rather, was, for the code is now very much dead. Cohalan appeared to argue in person for the hollow tile proposition.

The upshot of the whole affair has been striking and contained a dash of the dramatic. There was a widespread protest against the new code when it was first reported. Contractors said it was tyrannical and unfair and favored certain concerns at the expense of others. Mayor McClellan had not looked into it, supposing that it would go over till fall. In this belief he went on his summer vacation in the Adirondacks. It was at this point that those behind the building code got busy. The bill was

crowded through the board of aldermen by a close vote and went to the acting mayor, McGowan, for his signature, the law providing that in the absence from the city of the mayor the president of the board of aldermen shall become acting mayor. McGowan ordered a public hearing on the measure for a certain future day. The day arrived, but McGowan did not conduct the hearing. Something else arrived at the same time, that something else being the actual mayor, George B. McClellan. Acting Mayor McGowan did not even attend the hearing he himself had called.

It appears that McClellan away back in the Adirondack woods, far from telegraphs, railroads and newspapers, still got word of what had happened and, in a ride almost as sensational as that of Vice President Theodore Roosevelt down Mount Marcy in the same region, the chief executive of our biggest city broke out of the brush and took the next train for New York. Everybody knows what happened. The hearing was held and the bill was vetoed. When the railroading process was started to get the code through during the mid-summer vacation it appears that in some mysterious manner a provision was jimmied in that the measure should go into effect at once. The mayor had only intended to kill part of the code, but that extra artistic touch decided him to kill it all.

The most surprising thing about this whole affair is that McClellan should have done so meritorious an act. Nobody expected it. How could they? Here are two good deeds McClellan has performed in the last few weeks—the firing of Blingham and the veto of this hollow tile building code! The day of pleasant surprises is not past. There is hope for the world. If McClellan can rise to such heights of virtue there is nobody so far gone that he cannot be reclaimed. These two acts of righteousness mean one of two things: Either that the millennium is coming when everybody will be good, or—with especial emphasis on the "or"—George B. McClellan is a candidate for re-election. And here is the amusing part of it. Everybody in New York thinks it is because his honor wants another term. Nor does that imply that they are cynics. It only implies that they are acquainted with McClellan.

It is like Eugene Field's boy Bill, who "jest 'fore Christmas was as good as he could be." Just before election a politician is also good. It may sound uncharitable to ascribe such motives to our honorable mayor, but we who have lived under his government can naturally be excused from believing in his sudden conversion to sainthood. And to bear out our interpretation, a McClellan boom for mayor is just now being started. This may be coincidence, of course, but we who live in the immediate vicinity have a suspicion that if the face of the coincidence could be seen it would look surprisingly like that of Pat McCarren. McCarren wants to get even with Murphy, also to prevent the nomination of Judge Gaynor, also to serve certain other private and political ends, all of which could be accomplished by the veto of this code bill and the re-nomination of McClellan. So do not be surprised if "Little Mac" becomes a factor in the present fight.

Recurring to Gaynor, the Tammany candidacy of that gentleman has taken a trifle more definite form. Dan Cohalan—the same Sachem Cohalan of the hollow tiles—recently visited the Brooklyn Justice, so runs the story, and offered him the nomination. The reply of the Justice is not known. One significant fact about it all is that Gaynor intended to go to Europe and announcement was made of that fact, but for some reason he changed his mind. Of course, Cohalan denies the interview, but the World, the Press and other papers state with greater or less positiveness that the tender was made. Is it possible that the frame-up is to be a Murphy-Gaynor combination against a McClellan-McCarren combination? That is the way some keen observers size up the situation, and I admit that the suggestion is at least interesting. Personally I do not believe, however, that Gaynor will accept a Tammany nomination, and imagine that Murphy's candidate will be some man like Justice Dowling.

Coroner Julius Harburger, who has been in office so long that nobody remembers when he was not in office, has been saying things. Part of what he said would take the hair off and the other part would remove the skin under the hair. He was speaking of the New York police, which accounts for the caustic quality of his language. It is hard for a Gotham man to talk of our beloved police these days and confine himself to conventional language. Yet there was a day when New York was proud to refer to her police force as "the finest." But let

us hear Coroner Harburger, who ought to know what he is talking about:

"While I am about it I might just as well tell you that there have been 130 murders in the last two years in which the perpetrators have escaped. Put that down. I say there have been 130 of them. Doesn't it seem fine for a city of this size to have a police department that can't catch a murderer unless he handcuffs himself and gives himself up?"

"In the last twelve months more murders have been committed in this city and more murderers have escaped than in any other place on the face of the globe. Let the police explain that, if they can."

It seems bad for an official to talk about his own town like that, but it is still worse for it to be true.

The committee of 100 has unearthed an item of corporation jobbing that is characteristic. The New York City Railway company leased from the city the right to run cars across the Williamsburg bridge, also the right to sublease, paying therefor 5 cents for every car traversing the bridge. In turn the City Railway company sublet to another company the right to run cars over the Williamsburg bridge and charged this second company 10 cents per car. In other words, it paid 5 cents and received 10 cents, making 100 per cent off the city! Can you beat it?

Tariff Law Making In Hot Weather

NO DOUBT the contest in congress of the spring and summer of 1903 over the making of a tariff law will go down in history as one of the most memorable in the history of such controversies. In the tariff making of the present summer it has not been a straight out contest between the two opposite political parties, but rather a contest between the more or less conflicting elements of the dominant party. Comparatively little has been heard from the Democrats, and the discussion has turned on how the Aldrich or Cannon men or the "progressives" or "insurgents" of the Republican party were going to vote on particular schedules. The situation has been further confused by the fact that the term "insurgents" has been applied sometimes to the "downward revisionists," known as "progressives," and sometimes to the high tariff men who have opposed some of President Taft's views, especially his stand for placing certain raw materials like hides, oil and coal on the free list.

One of the struggles of the session which will be historic has been that over the listing of hides and the question of whether they should be placed on the free list, as in the Payne bill as it passed the house, or on the dutiable list, as in the Aldrich bill, and in the latter case how small the duty should be. When the Wilson law was passed hides were placed on the free list, but they were put back on the dutiable list at a 15 per cent rate when the Dingley law was passed. The contention of President Taft that hides should be free and manufactured leather products should be admitted under lower rates of duty was the center of much of the controversy in the sessions of the tariff conferees representing senate and house.

The chief opposition to the free hides program has come from states of the west largely interested in cattle growing, like Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Montana and the Dakotas. The senators from the three first named states opposed the free hides pro-



SENATOR FRANCIS A. WARREN.

gram from the start, and Senator Francis Emory Warren of Wyoming became recognized as perhaps the foremost spokesman of the group. He is regarded as one of the strongest men in the senate. He is a native of Massachusetts, is sixty-five years old, a civil war veteran and a recipient of a congressional medal of honor, was the first governor of Wyoming and has served almost continuously in the senate since 1890.

The Dingley bill became a law July 24, 1897. It was freely predicted last April that the Payne bill would be enacted into the statutes at a much earlier date in the summer than the measure introduced and named by the late Maine statesman. That was where the political prophets missed their guess.

To round up legislators in favor of this proposal or that and secure a line on the way the voting is liable to go is a task requiring a large degree of tact, diplomacy and knowledge of men. The possession of these qualities by Representative John W. Dwight of New York, the Republican "whip" in the house, has made him of great service to the president in the difficult problems arising in connection with the settlement of the tariff situation. Mr. Dwight was in close touch with Mr. Taft from the beginning of the sessions of the tariff conferees and has had so many meals at the White House that he knows just the kind of cooking characteristic of the new regime there.

Mr. Dwight represents the Thirtieth district of the Empire State in the house. He was born in Dryden, N. Y., in 1859 and began his service at Washington in the Fifty-seventh congress, having been re-elected continuously since. He is a very popular member, and his popularity is by no means confined to the Republican side of the house.

J. W. DWIGHT.

A BALLOONOGRAPH HUNT.

Novel Expedition to Africa to Get Pictures of Animals.

To hunt wild animals in East Africa with immense cameras suspended from balloons is the object of the W. D. Boyce African balloonograph expedition, which is now being organized. George R. Lawrence, chief photographer of the expedition, and Charles A. Hughes, who is attending to the business details of the trip, are now buying supplies and making arrangements.

Mr. Boyce, who is financing the expedition, is a publisher of weekly family papers in Chicago, and this business, together with other business ventures, has made him wealthy. It always has been his desire to accomplish something in the way of adventurous exploit, and he thinks he has now hit upon the line of endeavor whereby he will achieve that result. He has given Mr. Hughes and Mr.



W. D. BOYCE.

Lawrence plenty of leeway in preparing for the trip, and the photographic outfit which is to be taken along promises to eclipse any taken upon a photographic expedition into any corner of the earth.

Mr. Lawrence, of whom most is expected in the line of picture taking, is accustomed to novel feats in photography. He has been taking pictures from balloons for many years, and his inventions in perfecting this art are numerous. He has now perfected a controlling device which he says will hold a camera steady for a time exposure almost indefinitely, although suspended from a balloon hundreds of feet above the earth. This device he has patented in fifteen countries. Six or seven cameras are to be taken, the largest of which will be an aerial machine holding plates 22 by 55 inches. Sixty plates of this size are to be taken.

"With telescopic lenses fitted to this camera I expect to get larger pictures than have ever before been taken," said Mr. Lawrence. "The lenses for aerial work must necessarily be of much greater focal length than those of ordinary cameras—that is, they will photograph objects very large at a great distance. One of my cameras will have an equivalent focus of forty feet—that is, it is equivalent to an ordinary camera with a bellows forty feet long. This, in a way, is similar to using a long range rifle with a telescopic sight."

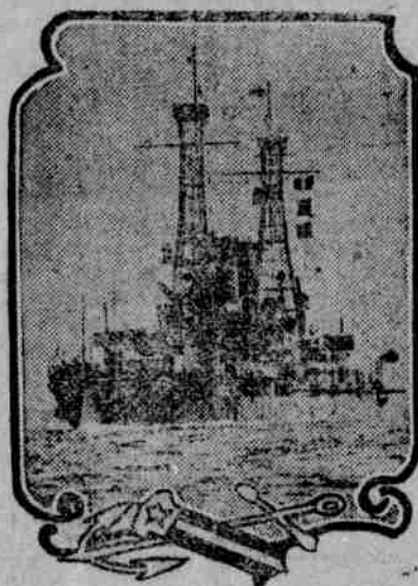
"I shall take two or three balloons, each holding 30,000 cubic feet of hydrogen gas and capable of supporting three men as well as the camera. I have great hopes of being able to photograph the lions, elephants and other animals in their native haunts, just as Mr. Roosevelt now is shooting them."

Mr. Boyce and Mr. Hughes will leave New York shortly for London, where they will buy most of the equipment. Mr. Lawrence will leave on Aug. 14 on the Hamburg for Naples, with his son, Raymond, eighteen years old, and Ildo Ramsdell, also of Chicago. The party expects to be gone nearly a year.

FIRE CONTROL MASTS.

The Experiment the American Navy Is Making With Them.

The maneuvers of the Atlantic fleet off the Massachusetts coast have called attention to the changed appearance of the fleet since the equipment of the battleships with the new fire control masts. There is difference of opinion as yet as to whether these masts constitute an improvement in battleship



BATTLESHIP WITH FIRE CONTROL MAST. construction or not. The matter is still in the experimental stage. Foreign naval experts are watching the experiment our navy is making with them with the view of their adoption in the navies they represent if found successful in our own.

HENRY LANE WILSON.

The Successor of David E. Thompson as Ambassador to Mexico.

Henry Lane Wilson, the newly appointed ambassador to Mexico, was formerly minister to Belgium and succeeds at the Mexican capital David E. Thompson of Iowa, who resigned. Mr. Wilson was born in Crawfordsville, Ind., in 1857 and was graduated from



HENRY LANE WILSON.

Wabash college in 1879. His father, the late James Wilson, was once minister to Venezuela. Mr. Wilson practiced law in Spokane, Wash., for some years, and in 1899 President Harrison offered him the post his father had occupied in South America. He declined this appointment, but in 1897 accepted from President McKinley that of minister to Chile. This post he held until promoted to the legation in Belgium in 1905.

He is considered to have made a fine record at this post.